list of employees in coordination with CBI, periodic review of the staff posted in sensitive areas, identification of corruption prone areas are some of the steps taken to strengthen the Vigilance mechanism.

Purchase of LNG from Iran

736. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether under a pact Government are bound to pick up one producing and one semi-discovered oil field in Iran in return for buying five million tonnes of LNG from Iran for 25 years;

(b) if so, what are the terms of the pact; and

(c) whether Iran has sent a list of five producing and semi-discovered blocks under the pact offering to share equity with an Indian Government firm; if so, what is Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) India and Iran have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 27-1-03 for furthering mutual cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector. In terms of this MOU, a Joint Working Group (JWG) has been constituted. During the first meeting of this JWG, held in New Delhi/Tehran in May 2003, both sides agreed to develop a package of cooperation in the oil and gas sector which *inter alia* included import of 5 MMTPA (Million Metric Tonne Per Annum) of LNG from Iran for 25 years, to be taken in two phases each of 2.5 MMTPA, and negotiating award of a significant sized discovered Iranian oilfield and a semi-discovered Iranian oilfield to an Indian public sector undertaking like ONGC Videsh Limited subject to technical and commercial competitiveness.

In terms of aforsaid JWG meeting, the Iranian side has forwarded a list of fields and the same are being evaluated.

Production of Petroleum and Natural Gas

737. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the production of petroleum and natural gas last year;

(b) how much it was increased or decreased; and

(c) the number of new projects which are under exploration for increasing the production of these products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) The production of crude oil and natural gas in the country during 2002-03 was 33.04 million metric tonne (MMT) and 31.39 Billion cubic metre (BCM), respectively, as against the production of 32.03 MMT and 29.72 BCM respectively, in the previous year.

(c) Following are the major schemes being implemented to enhance the hydrocarbon reserve base as well as to increase the oil and gas production.

(i) Implementation of Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes to improve recovery factor of existing major fields; in particular Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs. 10,000 crore, which would also held in accelerating oil production from these fields.

(ii) Production Sharing Contracts are in operation in 70 blocks offered under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and a 23 pre-NELP blocks.

(iii) Exploration in new areas, especially in deepwater and difficult frontier areas, as also exploration in the deeper layers of the producing fields.

(iv) Faster development of newly discovered fields and stepping up of use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, stimulation operations, drilling of wells etc., in producing areas.

Oil Revenue Deficit

738. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated value of oil revenue deficit during the current financial year;

(b) what steps are being taken to contain and reduce the deficit;

(c) what are the main factors which contribute to this deficit; and

(d) what will be the level of deficit in the coming years?